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SIPDIS

STATE FOR EUR/RPM

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SUBJECT: CORRECTED: NATO SECRETARY GENERAL STATEMENT ON RUSSIAN EXPULSION OF TWO NATO DIPLOMATS

REF: USNATO 178

¶1. (U) On May 6 NATO Secretary General de Hoop Scheffer released the following statement regarding Russian revocation of diplomatic status of two Canadian NATO diplomats in the NATO Information Office in Moscow:

BEGIN TEXT:

The Canadian Ambassador in Moscow, who provides the diplomatic status to the Director and Deputy Director of the NATO Information Office in Moscow, was called today to the Russian Foreign Ministry and informed that the diplomatic status of the Director and Deputy Director has been revoked.

Since that status is part of the NATO Russia Memorandum of Understanding which establishes the Information Office, the action effectively ends the mission of these two NATO officials in Moscow and, since they are the only International Staff of the Office, the work of the Office will continue but will be significantly affected.

The NATO Information Office in Moscow contributes to the development of greater public understanding within Russia on Russia-NATO relations, and serves as the focal point for disseminating information within Russia on NATO's role and activities.

As was agreed at the recent Strasbourg-Kehl Summit, NATO has recently decided to reengage Russia. This decision stands. The Russian measure is very unfortunate and counterproductive to our efforts to restore our dialogue and cooperation with Russia. Thus NATO very much regrets the Russian action and does not consider there to be any justification for it.

END TEXT

¶2. (U) Please disregard previous message (reftel) as it did not contain the Secretary General's complete statement.
VOLKER